



Satellite image with enhanced low cloud-top temperatures (degrees C) for 7:00 a.m. EST (NOAA)

Agricultural Weather Highlights - Thursday - January 24, 2002

- ***In the West***, temperatures were as low as the middle 20's degrees F in ***California's San Joaquin Valley citrus areas*** for the second consecutive morning, requiring freeze-protection measures in some orchards, hastening orange harvest activities in local cold spots, and slowing winter grain development. Meanwhile, drought-easing showers are returning to the ***Pacific Northwest***, but unfavorably dry conditions persist in much of the ***Southwest***.
- ***On the Plains***, mild, dry weather prevails in most areas, maintaining concerns about the hardiness of the winter wheat crop. However, a storm system is crossing ***southernmost portions of the region***, producing beneficial showers in ***southeastern Oklahoma and eastern Texas***, and triggering light snow on the ***southern High Plains***.
- ***In the Corn Belt***, slightly cooler air is replacing recent record warmth, although temperatures remain above normal. The mild weather and a patchy snow cover are minimizing livestock stress and promoting off-season fieldwork.
- ***In the South***, drought-easing showers continue across the ***interior Southeast***, including the ***southern Appalachians***. Meanwhile, very warm weather prevails in the ***southern Atlantic and eastern Gulf Coast regions***, promoting pasture and winter grain growth.

Outlook: Showers are forecast to diminish across the ***Southeast*** by week's end, but widespread precipitation will continue across the ***Northwest***. Meanwhile, mostly dry weather will persist across the ***Plains, Midwest, and Southwest***. Mild weather will continue across the ***Midwest, South, and East***, while below-normal temperatures will prevail in the ***West***. Bitterly cold air will begin to edge into the ***northern Plains*** during the weekend. The NWS 6-10 day outlook for January 29 - February 2 calls for an outbreak of bitterly cold weather to threaten portions of the ***western and northern U.S.***, including the ***northern Plains***, where temperatures may fall below -20 degrees F. In contrast, above-normal temperatures are forecast across the ***eastern half of the nation***, although cooler air is likely to overspread the region in early February. Significant precipitation is expected across much of the ***South and East***, excluding ***Florida***, and from ***California to the central Rockies***. In contrast, mostly dry weather is forecast in the ***Northwest*** and on the ***southern Plains***.

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